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Double- entendre in Norman Rockwell's paintings

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Norman Rockwell took his inspiration from scenes of everyday life. His illustrations often represented children and their games, or the moments of transition in their lives. This outstanding artist is considered as the painter of idyllic, innocent rural or small town life. We are going to show that this is not always the case, and that very often, he managed to introduce a sexual innuendo into his paintings.

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L141xH150/The_girl_at_mirror-430ec-d8671.jpg **Girl at the Mirror**

Girl at the mirror

Here, Rockwell has represented a girl who is staring at her reflection in a mirror. On her knees, there is a fashion or a movie magazine, showing a famous actress that the girl has probably chosen as her idol. The girl is wearing a white night shirt (white being the symbol of purity). Of course, we are moved to see how she appears to be torn between the desire to grow-up and the fear of saying goodbye to her childhood...

But without being dirty-minded, we can't help notice the reflexion of her bare legs in the mirror... unwittingly, this young girl is revealing more of her body than decency allows !

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L138xH150/Day_in_the_Life-893a0-89027.jpg **Day in the Life**

Back from the Prom

The scene takes place in a coffeeshop, and there are four characters. The middle, the girl is wearing a white (again !) prom dress. In front of her, the boy who took her dancing is looking at her with stars in his eyes. How touching ! A perfect illustration of the first pangs of love !...

But look again : next to her, on the left, there is a man in the shadows, wearing a cap and a leather jacket like Marlon Brando in **The Wild One**, looking at the girl's back and undressing her with his eyes... and there is also the waiter, who pretends to be smelling the flowers adorning the girl's dress... whereas actually he is probably plunging his eyes into her décolletage !

http://lyc-george-sand-la-chatre.tice.ac-orleans-tours.fr/eva/sites/lyc-george-sand-la-chatre/local/cache-vignettes/L136xH150/Grand_Pasm-9686d-4e346.jpg **Grand Pa**

Grand Pa

This painting is the best (for us) representation of sexual innuendos in Norman Rockwell's art. What are we seeing, actually ? A grandfather playing the cello for his granddaughter ? Or a dirty old man watching a little girl lifting her skirt as she dances to the music ?

At the time when Norman Rockwell painted these illustrations, middle class morals were very prudish and puritan. His contemporaries, who adored him, would probably have been shocked by our interpretations of his paintings. But we are convinced that Norman Rockwell deliberately introduced these sexual connotations in his art, as a joke at the expense of the innocent readers of the Saturday Evening Post